

Information Disclosure Statement

1. The foreign references listed on the Information Disclosure Statement filed August 31, 2006 have been considered. Please disregard the previous annotated IDS and note the annotated IDS included in the present communication. Copies of the foreign references cited in the International Search Report and not provided by the International Bureau that could be retrieved from the Japanese Patent database have been included with this communication and placed in the file. References JP 2003-510899 A and JP 2002-515205 A could not be found or retrieved from the Japanese database. However, copies of their respective WIPO publications (WO 2001/022674 A1 and WO 1997/050187 A1) have been considered and included with the present communication.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Ryan J. Johnson whose telephone number is (571)270-1264. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday - Thursday, 9:00 am - 5:00 pm EST.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Robert J. Pascal can be reached on 571-272-1769. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

/R. J. J./
Examiner, Art Unit 2817